Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Currently amended) A communication control system ~~in accordance with claim 1,~~ that controls multiplex communication in the form of fixed-length cells, said communication control system comprising:

a common cell buffer assembly that stores therein cells of the multiplex communication; and

a buffer management unit that controls a process of reading a cell from said cell buffer assembly and a process of writing a cell into said cell buffer assembly, thus controlling communication between a large number of input-output ports and a multiplex communication network,

wherein said buffer management unit comprises:

a cell discard controller that discards a cell stored in said cell buffer assembly when a time period of not shorter than a preset discard reference time has elapsed since storage of the cell into said cell buffer assembly; and

a writing time management unit that maps each cell to a writing time of the cell and manages the mapping, and

said cell discard controller discards a cell, based on an elapsed time since the writing time of the cell.

3.   (Original) A communication control system in accordance with claim 2, wherein said writing time management unit comprises:

a writing time buffer that stores a writing time of each cell in time series; and

a related information storage unit that stores related information, which relates data stored in said cell buffer assembly to data stored in said writing time buffer.

4.   (Currently amended) A communication control system in accordance with claim [[1]] 2, wherein the multiplex communication includes a plurality of different quality classes of communication,

the discard reference time is set for each quality class, and

said buffer management unit controls the communication according to the quality class.

5.   (Currently amended) A communication control system in accordance with claim [[1]] 2, wherein said buffer management unit comprises:

a vacant buffer management unit that manages vacant areas in said cell buffer assembly;

a cell management unit that stores management information to manage places of storage of a series of cells, which constitute each communication;

a writing controller that writes a new cell in a vacant area specified by said vacant buffer management unit and transmits a result of the writing to said cell management unit; and

3

a reading controller that reads a cell from said cell buffer assembly, based on the management information in said cell management unit and transmits a result of the reading to said vacant buffer management unit.

6.   (Original) A communication control system in accordance with claim 5, wherein said cell discard controller deletes information on a place of storage of the cell to be discarded from said cell management unit, and transmits the place of storage as a new vacant area to said vacant buffer management unit, thereby implementing discard of the cell.

Claims 7-10.   (Cancelled)